KERA Initiative Summary
4/29/04

Kentucky Education Technology System (KETS)

Kentucky recognizes two things about technology: It is the wave of the future, and it has great potential as an equalizing force in the provision of educational resources.

KETS provides networked computers and other electronic tools to support teaching and learning and to facilitate administrative functions at the school and district levels.

In Phase I, designed to put the infrastructure in place, KETS sent money into every Kentucky school district to put powerful technology in classrooms. Each year, districts received funds by matching them dollar for dollar until every classroom is now equipped with these tools:

- Direct dial-out phones in every classroom for teachers;
- Video access to classroom TVs in every classroom;
- One KETS-standard, networked computer for every teacher, with access to productivity software (word processing, spreadsheets, presentation, database) e-mail, the Internet and other instructional software;
- One KETS-standard, networked computer (with the same capabilities as the teacher's computer) per six students.

Phase II, now in progress, is designed to focus on applying KETS dollars to operations, maintenance, incremental replacement and new and emerging technologies. Districts continue to match KETS state funds received dollar for dollar.

Over several years, the Milken Foundation, Kentucky Long-Term Policy Research Center and other national studies/publications have rated Kentucky a top-five state in the use of technology tools in instruction. Several important features make KETS a nationally recognized leader in education technology:

- Long-term implementation based on a state master plan, district plans and school plans;
- Statewide data, voice, video, text software and hardware infrastructure to serve all districts, schools and classrooms for instruction and administration;
- Statewide teacher, student and administrator technology standards in place;
- Every classroom and school equipped with high speed connections to deliver the Internet and electronic mail to every classroom;
- Every student, teacher and administrator provided with a school-provided email account;
- Every school equipped with a text Internet library;
- State-Internet firewall protection provided statewide;

- Student Technology Leadership Program (STLP) support available to assist with local support gaps;
- First state in the nation to have a standardized school (STI) and financial management (MUNIS) system in every school and district;
- School-level flexibility to choose from a wide range of hardware and software;
- Reduced costs for every district through statewide contracting.

Kentucky was the first state to have every one of its school districts linked to an integrated network. Technology has such an important role in Kentucky that a new technology competency standard for both new and experienced teachers is included in the teacher certification process.

Statutory References: KRS 156.660, 156.666, 156.670, 156.690, 168.015